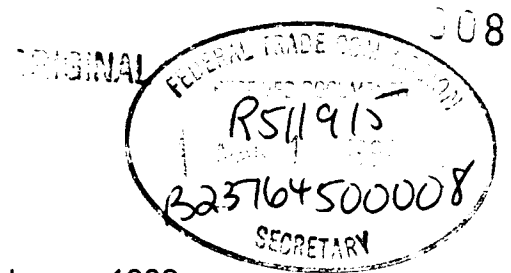


D. D. *F* R E N C H



24 February 1999

Secretary  
Federal Trade Commission  
6<sup>th</sup> & Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, D.C. 20580

I wish to comment on the proposed revisions to the Care Labeling Rule. I am a second generation small drycleaner (7 employees) that caters to the high end consumer. I believe that alternative care labeling is a MUST! The cost is minimal & the return is enormous, a win-win situation for all. The consumer is protected by full disclosure of choices, the professional cleaner is able to choose the best method for the garment, the retailer sees fewer disgruntled customers, and the manufacturer is able to decrease the number of returned garments.

In our plant, we see European designer/couture garments which already carry the alternative care label. American products need to be on a par with the European ones. Today's consumers have a sizeable investment in their wardrobes. They expect to have a durable, serviceable garment. The manufacturer should provide the proper information to protect that investment. We see care labels that say DO NOT DRY CLEAN/DO NOT WASH in \$1,000.00 garments. What is the consumer to do other than return the garment?

Time is also a factor with today's consumer. Customers are bringing us garments that could be done at home. However, they do not want to spend the time required to properly spot, wash and finish the garment. This is particularly true of the more expensive garments. Our customer would rather trust a professional to maintain those investment pieces. Also, the natural fiber clothing - cotton and linen- requires more finishing than synthetics and therefore is more difficult and timely for the consumer to maintain.

Drycleaners have always "wet-cleaned" as well as dry cleaned. Whether they hand wash, use a home washer, or one of the newer "wet-cleaning" machines, it is a service the professional must provide if they are committed to quality cleaning. Environmentalists are promoting wet-cleaning as the earth friendly alternative to solvent. In reality, modern dry cleaning machines have increased solvent mileage and solvent recovery rates of 99.5%. Wash water, on the other hand goes down the drain with each load. In our region of the country, water is for DRINKING. We have already been faced with restricted or rationed water usage. Required wet-cleaning will drastically reduce our precious water resources.

In summation, an educated consumer with choices is a satisfied and happy consumer. THAT is what we are all trying to achieve.

Sincerely,  
Shirley French Reichstadt, CED,CPD